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STATE FOR COURTNEY MUSSER

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SUBJECT: FINLAND: GOLDSTONE FOLLOW-UP ACTION

REF: STATE 015722

¶1. (SBU) Pol/Econoff delivered reftel remarks to Riikka Eela, Regional Manager for the Middle East Unit in the Bureau of Middle East and North African Affairs at the MFA. When Pol/Econoff thanked the GOF for having abstained from the earlier vote on the Goldstone Report Eela indicated that this abstention occurred because the GOF will not accept any resolution that presses for Security Council action on the Goldstone Report. She reinforced this point later in the conversation when she said that using the Security Council for a Goldstone-related resolution is a red line for almost all of the EU.

¶2. (SBU) The GOF sees many areas in which it agrees with the reftel's talking points including:
--Israel has the democratic institutions to ensure an effective and accountable investigation.
--The main responsibility for investigations is with the two parties, Israel and the Palestinian Authority.
--That the Secretary General is correct when stating that it is too early in the process investigative process to be able to evaluate them.

¶3. (SBU) The GOF continues to disagree with the USG use of "alleged crimes" when referring to the report and prefers to use "reported crimes" because, in the GOF view, this adds credibility to the reports of the crimes. Also, the GOF is disappointed that reftel talking points do not note that the current draft of the resolution is much more balanced than the previous draft. Eela made the point that positive recognition should be given to the Palestinian Authority for resisting regional pressure to put forth a more one-sided resolution focused solely against Israel's actions.

¶4. (SBU) In response to specific reftel points, Eela stated the following:
--The GOF does not see the reference to East Jerusalem as being part of the Palestine occupied territory as a problem.
--The EU has always stated that it does not accept the annexations made in the wake of the 1967 war.
--While Hamas's role in the Gaza fighting is not specifically mentioned it is addressed in principal in the current resolution.

¶5. (SBU) Eela finished by saying that the GOF does not yet have a final position on this paper but the initial view is that the current draft is much more balanced than the previous versions.

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